

# **ICWA Workgroup Meeting Minutes**

## **January 18, 2008**

*[Additions to agenda: SB 678 All County Letter, ICWA Notices, Expert Witness Guidelines, Washoe Tribe, BIA Notices Going to Centralized Office, New ICWA Forms.]*

### **CALIFORNIA CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION SUMMIT**

CDSS shared information regarding this event scheduled to be held February 12, 2008 in Sacramento. Registration brochures were provided. Theme: Multi-disciplinary prevention/support. A tribal panel will be included to present on prevention efforts by tribal organizations.

### **ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) REGARDING SB 678**

Discussed the ACL being written by CDSS to provide direction to the counties as to the application of SB 678. It should be released next week. CDSS will send the web link to the workgroup.

### **PERMANENCY FOR INDIAN CHILDREN/YOUTH SUB-WORKGROUP**

CDSS reported on the work of the Permanency sub-workgroup status. CDSS also reported that they had secured approval from the Administration for Children and Families to utilize the National Resource Center (NRC) on Adoptions to provide technical assistance regarding customary adoptions. Kathy Deserly, Senior Consultant to the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, and founding board member of the Indian Child and Family Resource Center based in Helena, Montana, will make a presentation and provide consultation to the Sub-workgroup on February 6, 2008, 9:00am – 1:00pm. Workgroup members are welcome to attend.

- Mike Edwards reported that the Karuk Tribe is working with NICWA on a free regional training on customary adoptions, will probably be held in May at the Redding Rancheria.
- Tribal sponsorship of applicable legislation is pending.

More tribal representation is desired on the Permanency sub-workgroup; the current sub-workgroup membership list was circulated.

### **CFSR STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS FOR TRIBES**

CDSS reported on the CFSR progress and announced that tribal interviews would be held February 6, 2008, 1:30pm, at CDSS, 18<sup>th</sup> floor. CDSS initially requested in-person participation; however, teleconference will be available. CDSS needs names, phone numbers, and emails of everyone who wants to participate. An orientation packet will be sent to prospective participants. Sample questions were distributed. Questions will be put to the group as a whole, and random questions will be asked. Originally, only eight (8) people were going to be allowed to attend; CDSS has now been informed that anyone interested can attend. Contact person is Sue Hance at CDSS.

### **ICWA NOTICES**

It was pointed out that some tribes have not been receiving ICWA notices within the past nine months. Tribes asked CDSS to look into this matter as they reported seeing a significant decrease in noticing in recent months. CDSS Operations Bureau will inquire with counties on this issue. Two counties were identified: Sacramento and Alameda. Tribes were requested to notify CDSS as to any other counties that are of concern. The county regional representative from San Francisco County indicated that the implementation of Differential Response may be one reason that notices are declining since more families are being served by CPS without going to court. An issue was raised

regarding Notices and Confidentiality, and Napa County's use of outside contractors (FFAs?) to do their ICWA noticing. Workgroup members were asked to send inquiries and concerns to [ana.bolanos-kellison@dss.ca.gov](mailto:ana.bolanos-kellison@dss.ca.gov).

- There was a brief discussion about the nature of differential response, decision making tools, family-to-family, and child permanency.

## **STATE ANNUAL ICWA CONFERENCE**

This discussion was tabled until the next meeting. Tribal reps want to discuss further.

## **EXPERT WITNESS GUIDELINES**

CDSS asked for volunteers to serve on a sub-workgroup to assist in the development of expert witness guidelines. Interested individuals to date are Ann Gilmour, Carol White Mountain, and Christine Williams.

## **WASHOE TRIBE**

The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California reported that they have developed a CPS/Tribal TANF MOU with Sacramento County to share information on clients they have in common. It was approved by the Board of Supervisors; will be signed by Tribal Council and Sacramento County on March 29, 2008.

## **BIA NOTICES GOING TO CENTRALIZED OFFICE**

There has been no recent news, per the BIA.

## **NEW ICWA FORMS**

Judicial Council reported they are getting lots of calls from various entities with questions, issues, etc. The group agreed there needed to be more time to test the use of the new forms (these apply to county workers only – not something tribal ICWA workers use). So it was decided that a discussion of the JV (ICWA) form issues should be revisited in the morning County Representative portion of the ICWA Workgroup in July.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Christine Williams informed the group that she is working with California CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), (a non-profit, non-state agency) to establish a Tribal CASA Program. [By itself this was not an announcement and left one wondering what was announced!]
- Ann Gilmore reported on the AOC ICWA Initiative (a contract between CDSS and the Administrative Office of the Courts) that is charged with working on policy development, has developed quick guides regarding ICWA for counties and the courts; provides trainings/educational offerings, including trainings for judges and court clerks. For more information, email: [ann.gilmour@jud.ca.gov](mailto:ann.gilmour@jud.ca.gov).
- Next Meeting: March 28, 2008 (Possibly hosted by the Morongo Tribe – to be confirmed.)

## **MEETING ADJOURNED**